

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-18 are pending in the present application. Claim 1 is herein amended. No new matter has been entered. In light of the forgoing amendments, and the following remarks, Applicants earnestly solicit favorable reconsideration.

On the Merits

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kawata et al.* (US 2004/0004688) in view of *Tashiro et al.* (US 2004/0257506), hereinafter referred to as *Kawata* and *Tashiro* respectively.

Independent Claim 1:

An elliptically polarizing plate of the claimed invention includes a polarizer, a protective layer formed on one side of the polarizer, a first birefringent layer serving as a X/2 plate, and a second birefringent layer serving as a X/4 plate in the order given. The first birefringent layer and the second birefringent layer are each formed by using a liquid crystal material.

(i) A slow axis of the first birefringent layer is defined at one angle of +23° to +24° or -23° to -24° with respect to an absorption axis of the polarizer.

(ii) In-plane retardation ($\Delta n d$) of the first birefringent layer at a wavelength of 590 nm is 220 nm to 270 nm.

(iii) In-plane retardation ($\Delta n d$) of the second birefringent layer at a wavelength of 590 nm is 100 nm to 140 nm.

Applicants respectfully submit that *Tashiro* does not disclose the subject-matter of claim 1 which satisfies the above-defined Romanettes (i), (ii) and (iii).

In addition, an elliptically polarizing plate of the claimed invention has a particular effect in that a light leakage in black image can be prevented effectively. This effect is shown in Table 4. The transmittance data of A03, A04, A15, A17 and A18 which satisfy the above-defined (i), (ii) and (iii) is 0.07% or less. Such small values of the transmittance data of A03, A04, A15, A17 and A18 show a particular effect in that a light leakage in black image can be prevented effectively.

As such, Applicants respectfully ask that the rejection be withdrawn.

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Art Unit: 2871

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. §1.114
Attorney Docket No.: 062649

Dependent Claims 2, 3, 5 and 16-18:

As claims 2, 3, 5 and 16-18 each depend from independent claim 1, the rationale presented above regarding claim 1 also applies to its dependent claims. As such, Applicants respectfully ask that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

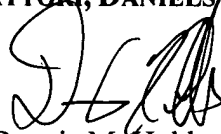
If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

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If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,
WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Hubbs', is positioned above the printed name of the attorney.

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DMH/mra